

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 1-16 will have been canceled while claims 17-31 will have been submitted for consideration by the Examiner. Additionally, a new title and a new Abstract are being submitted by the present Response.

The cancellation of the pending claims should not be interpreted as a disclaimer of the subject matter or as an acquiescence in the propriety of the Examiner's rejections. Rather, the claims are being canceled merely to submit new claims that more clearly define Applicants invention. Moreover, the cancellation of the previously pending claims is not made in view of the prior art and accordingly, should not give rise to any prosecution history estoppel.

Initially, Applicants wish to respectfully thank the Examiner for acknowledging their Claim for Foreign Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 and for confirming receipt of all of the foreign priority documents upon which the Claim for Foreign Priority is based. The certified copies were received from the International Bureau.

Applicants further respectfully thank the Examiner for considering the documents cited in the Information Disclosure Statement filed in the present application on April 15, 2005 by the return of the signed and initialed PTO-1449 Form that was attached to the above-noted Information Disclosure Statement.

Additionally, Applicants respectfully thank the Examiner for accepting the drawings filed in the present application on December 14, 2004, concurrently with the filing of the present application.

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner objected to the specification. In particular, the Examiner objected to the Abstract of the Disclosure as being informal and also required a new, more descriptive title.

By the present Response, Applicants have revised the Abstract of the Disclosure to comprise a single paragraph. Applicants have also revised the Abstract to more clearly define the invention as now being recited in the pending claims. Additionally, Applicants have submitted a new, more descriptive title for the invention. In particular, the title submitted is descriptive of the invention as it is now being claimed.

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner objected to claim 14 because of informalities. In view of the cancellation of claim 14, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's objection has been rendered moot.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 4-6, 9, 13 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over PAULRAJ et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,351,499) in view of BIRCHLER et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,440,590). In view of the cancellation of all of the previously pending claims, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's rejection of any of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103 has been rendered moot.

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 8, 12 and 16 are objected to for being dependent upon a rejected base claim. However, the Examiner indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten into independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In response to the outstanding Official Action, Applicants have submitted claims 17-31 for consideration by the Examiner. Each of these claims incorporates a feature

previously recited in claims 8, 12 and 16 and are thus submitted to be patentable over the references of record herein, at least for this reason.

In this regard, Applicants note that claims 17-24 do not precisely correspond to any of the claims previously indicated to contain allowable subject matter. Nevertheless, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of features recited, particularly in Applicants newly submitted independent claim 17 is clearly patentable over the references cited by the Examiner at least for the reasons that the Examiner indicated the presence of allowable subject matter in claims 8, 12 and 16.

Newly submitted claim 25 corresponds to claim 8 rewritten into independent form and accordingly, at least for this reason, claim 25 should be indicated to be allowable. In this regard, in rewriting claim 8 into independent form, Applicants have revised the language of the claim to be more fully consistent with English language grammar, syntax and idiom. Also, the claim has been revised to eliminate step terminology.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of each of the outstanding objections and rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action together with an indication of the allowability of all the claims pending in the present application. Such action is respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate and proper.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

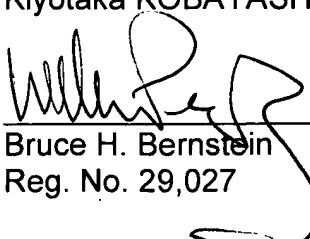
Applicants have made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believe that they have now done so. Applicants have submitted a new title and a new Abstract for entry into the present application. Applicants have further canceled all of the pending claims and have submitted a new claim set for consideration by the Examiner.

With respect to the newly submitted claims, Applicants have set forth a basis for the patentability thereof at least in accordance with the Examiner's indication in the outstanding Official Action. Accordingly, Applicants have provided a clear evidentiary basis supporting the patentability of all the claims in the present application and respectfully request an indication to such effect in due course.

Any amendments to the claims (or new claims) which have been made (as submitted) in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made (or submitted) for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this Response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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